

# Kansas State Fire Marshal – Fire Prevention Division

References (s): 06-IFC/403

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## FIRE FACT 036 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLY EVENTS

Indoor public events at schools held after regular hours, whether sports, drama or academic gatherings, bring large numbers of occupants and an increased risk of incident. **Regardless of who is holding the event, THE BUILDING OWNER IS RESPONSIBLE for providing adequate fire and life safety for those attending or participating.**

Steps shall be taken **before the event** to verify that all required exits are operable, accessible, and in good working order. This means no blocked access, storage, or junk accumulated in exit corridors. Verify that the building's fire alarm system is on and operable. Proper emergency light and/or generator tests shall have been conducted and documented within specified timeframes to make sure they will be operable during the events. Verify that written instructions covering emergency procedures, exiting, or emergency shelter procedures, including pre-written announcements for fire, severe weather or bomb threat situations are available to event announcers. In situations where severe weather is possible, staff and ushers shall verify that shelters are accessible and are ready for use.

At events attended by more than 300 persons (not including school assemblies which are not open to the general public), **either** a voice announcement shall be made at the beginning of each event **or** a written notice provided in programs, stating: *"In accordance with Kansas State Fire Marshal regulations, we request that you take a moment to identify the two emergency exits closest to you. We have checked these exits and the other emergency equipment in this building and verify they are available for use in case of emergency. In case of an emergency, pay close attention to the announcer or your usher for important life safety information."* or equivalent language.

At events attended by more than 1,000 persons, trained crowd managers/ushers shall be provided at a ratio of at least 1 crowd manager for every 250 occupants. The level of training requirements will vary from facility to facility; however, basic training should include familiarization with fire and tornado alarm sounds, knowledge of exit and storm refuge locations, and appropriate behaviors during an emergency.

During the event, no vehicles shall be parked in a manner that will block the safe total exiting of occupants from any exit door. **At no time can more than the set maximum number of occupants be admitted to the event.** Aisles and corridors shall be maintained and shall not be blocked by chairs, tables, or spectators. Ushers shall be aware of procedures and responsibilities in case of fire or other panic-producing situations.

Every year many public assembly events occur in Kansas schools without incident; however, these items provide an increased level of safety in the event something goes wrong.

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## **Fire preparedness begins before the event.**

School administrators shall verify:

- that all exits are operable, accessible, and in good working order;
- the building fire alarm is on and operable;
- proper emergency lighting and/or generator tests shall have been conducted and documented to insure they will be operable during the events.

**Written plans shall be provided** covering emergency procedures, exiting, and emergency shelter procedures. These shall include pre-written announcements for fire or severe weather and are available to event announcers. Additional plans may be developed to address bomb threats.

## **Crowd control for events attended by more than 300 persons.**

A voice announcement shall be made at the beginning of the event **OR** a written notice in the event program stating; “ In accordance with the Kansas State Fire Marshal regulations, we request that you take a moment to identify two emergency exits closest to you. We have checked these exits and the other emergency equipment in this building and verify they are available for use in case of an emergency. In the case of an emergency, pay close attention to the announcer for important life safety information.” Equivalent language must be provided for each facility or event.

**Events attended by more than 1,000 occupants** shall be provided with trained crowd managers/ushers at a ratio of one crowd manager for every 250 occupants.

The level of training requirements will vary from facility to facility.

Basic training should include: familiarization with fire and tornado alarm sounds; knowledge of exit and storm refuge locations; and appropriate behaviors during an emergency.